No. 93-377

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Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1993

DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION AND FINANCE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK AND JAMES W. WETZLER, COMMISSIONER OF TAXATION AND FINANCE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK and the TAX APPEALS TRIBUNAL OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, State Campus, Albany, New York,

Petitioners,

against

MILHELM ATTEA & BROS. INC. a/k/a MILHELM ATTEA & BROTHERS, INC., a/k/a MILHEM ATTEA & BROTHERS, INC., 1509 Clinton Street, Buffalo, New York 14206,

Respondent.

JAMES W. WETZLER, as Commissioner of Taxation and Finance of the State of New York; THE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION AND FINANCE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK and the TAX APPEALS TRIBUNAL OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, State Campus, Albany, New York 12227,

Petitioners,

against

ELIAS H. ATTEA, JR., 6175 Stickler Street, Clarence, New York 14031,

Respondent.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE COURT OF APPEALS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

BRIEF FOR PETITIONERS

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Question Presented

Whether, in order to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indian purchasers of cigarettes from Indian retailers, the State of New York may require the retailers' cigarette suppliers to comply with regulations limiting the quantity of tax exempt cigarettes which can be purchased for resale at reservation outlets to an amount no greater than the maximum legitimate Indian consumption of the reservation and imposing upon the suppliers minimal burdens relating to record keeping and reporting.

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SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER TERM, 1993.

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ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE COURT OF APPEALS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

BRIEF FOR PETITIONERS

Opinions Below

The opinion of the Court of Appeals was rendered on June 10, 1993. The opinion is reported at 81 NY2d 417 (1993). It is reprinted at pages A3-A12 of the Appendix to the Printed Petition for Certiorari ("A____"; references to the Joint Appendix are cited as "JA____").

The opinion of the Appellate Division was rendered on July 9, 1992, and is reported at 181 AD2d 210 (3d Dept 1992). It is set forth at A13-A16.

The order of this Court granting petitioners' petition for a writ of certiorari and vacating the judgment of the Appellate Division, Third Department and remanding the case to the Appellate Division for further consideration in light of *Oklahoma Tax Commission v Citizen Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe of Oklahoma*, 498 US 505 (1991), was entered on January 21, 1992. The order is reported at ____ US ____, 117 L Ed 2d 99, 112 S Ct 926 (1992). It is set forth at A17-A18.

The original opinion of the Appellate Division, Third Department was rendered on December 6, 1990. The opinion is reported at 164 AD2d 300 (3d Dept 1990). It is set forth at A19-A24.[1]

[1]The original order of the Appellate Division is set forth at A25-A27.

The opinion of the Supreme Court, Albany County, was rendered on June 5, 1989. The opinion is not reported. It is set forth at A28-A32.[2]

Jurisdiction

The order of the Court of Appeals was entered on June 10, 1993. By order filed November 1, 1993, this Court granted petitioners' petition for a writ of certiorari to review the order and opinion of the New York Court of Appeals. This Court's jurisdiction to review the case rests upon 28 USC § 1257(a).

Statutory and Regulatory Provisions Involved

25 USC §§ 261-264; New York Tax Law §§ 471, 474, 481, 1814, 1846, 1847; 20 NYCRR §§ 335.6 and 335.7. These provisions are set forth in pertinent part in the appendix to this brief.[3]

Statement of the Case

A. Facts and Procedural Background

These cases involve questions of whether and to what extent federal law permits States to impose incidental burdens on Indian traders to prevent the avoidance of tax by

[2]The order and judgment of the Supreme Court, Albany County, is set forth at A33-A43.

[3]Effective December 19, 1990, 20 NYCRR 335.6 and 335.7, the regulations at issue, were renumbered 20 NYCRR 336.6 and 336.7 without any substantive change. In order to maintain consistency with the opinions rendered by the New York State courts, we will continue to employ the old numbering.

non-Indian purchasers of retail goods, here cigarettes, from retailers on Indian reservations. Respondent Milhelm Attea & Bros., Inc. ("Milhelm") is a licensed New York State cigarette tax agent and wholesale dealer of cigarettes (New York Tax Law §§ 470[6] & [9], 472, 480), a portion of whose business involves the wholesale sale of cigarettes to retailers on various Indian reservations in New York. Respondent Elias H. Attea, Jr. ("Elias") is also in the business of selling cigarettes at wholesale on Indian reservations but is not licensed as either a cigarette tax agent or wholesale dealer of cigarettes.

In December, 1988 Milhelm and Elias brought independent actions in the Supreme Court, Albany County seeking declaratory and permanent injunctive relief to enjoin the application to their businesses of certain regulations adopted by the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance in August, 1988. The regulations were designed to prevent the sale of untaxed cigarettes to non-Indians at retail outlets on Indian reservations located in New York State. It was the respondents' contention that they were federal Indian traders and that insofar as the new regulations imposed burdens upon their dealings with their Indian customers, the regulations were preempted by the Indian trader statutes. 25 USC § 261 *et seq*.

The challenged regulations are substantially similar to regulations adopted by the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance effective November 30, 1988 dealing with the sale and distribution of motor fuel in New York. In *State Tax Commission of the State of New York v Herzog Bros. Trucking, Inc.*, 487 US 1212 (1988), this Court granted a petition for certiorari filed on behalf of the State Tax Commission and vacated and remanded to the New York Court of Appeals

for further consideration, in light of the then proposed motor fuel regulations, a judgment of the Court of Appeals holding that the State's "pass on and collect" motor fuel tax scheme could not be applied to motor fuel distributors selling motor fuel at wholesale to Indian retailers because the Indian trader statutes, 25 USC § 261 *et seq*., preempted the field of regulating trade with Indians. *Herzog Bros. Trucking, Inc. v State Tax Commission*, 69 NY2d 536 (1987).

Following remand, the Court of Appeals adhered to its original decision. 72 NY2d 720 (1988). Because the regulations only applied to sales of motor fuel made after January 1, 1989, and it appeared that the Herzog Brothers, Inc. would not continue to sell to Indians after that date, the court declined to consider the validity of the new regulations. The court correctly observed in this regard that to do so under the circumstances "would constitute an advisory opinion involving hypothetical future transactions of unknown parties". 72 NY2d at 725. The court did opine that "[i]n the absence of a reversal by the Supreme Court, we assume that our interpretation of those decisions [referring to *Central Machinery Co. v Arizona Tax Commn*., 448 US 160 (1980), and *Warren Trading Post Co. v Arizona Tax Commn*., 380 US 685 (1965)] and our application of them to the facts before us represents the present state of the law on the subject". 72 NY2d at 724-725.

On January 18, 1989, the Supreme Court, Albany County, granted a preliminary injunction as requested by the respondents. Petitioners served their answers on January 20, 1989, and each side thereafter moved for summary judgment. The Supreme Court (Cheeseman, J.) rendered its decision on June 5, 1989. Based on the authority of the Court of Appeals' decision in *Herzog Brothers Trucking*,

supra, which the court found indistinguishable, the Supreme Court granted respondents' motions for summary judgment declaring the challenged regulations invalid with respect to their sales of cigarettes to Indians on Indian reservations in New York and denied in all respects petitioners' motion to dismiss or, in the alternative, for summary judgment (A28-A32). The court's order and judgment was entered on August 22, 1989.

Petitioners appealed, and by a unanimous decision dated December 6, 1990, the Appellate Division, Third Department affirmed (A19-A24). In the opinion of the Appellate Division the issues presented were similar to those considered by the New York Court of Appeals in *Herzog Brothers Trucking*, *supra*, by which the Appellate Division deemed itself to be bound. The court said in relevant part, "[a]ccordingly, the tax scheme under review here fails because it imposes some burden, although only minimal, on the Indian trader contrary to the Court of Appeals' interpretation of the applicable Supreme Court decisions" (A24).

Petitioners thereafter filed an appeal as of right to the New York Court of Appeals pursuant to New York CPLR 5601(b)(l). By an order dated May 9, 1991, the Court of Appeals dismissed petitioners' appeal *sua sponte*, upon the ground that no substantial constitutional question was directly involved. Petitioners' subsequent motion for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeals was denied without opinion by an order of the Court of Appeals entered on September 12, 1991.

On November 25, 1991, the petitioners filed a petition for a writ of certiorari. The basis upon which the writ was sought was that this Court's decision in *Oklahoma Tax*

Commission v Citizen Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe of Oklahoma, 498 US 505 (1991), which was decided by the Court some two months after the Appellate Division rendered its original decision, made clear that this Court intended its decisions in *Moe v Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes*, 425 US 463 (1976), and *Washington v Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation*, 447 US 134 (1980), to be read as affirming the right of the States, notwithstanding the Indian trader laws, to exercise some regulatory authority over Indian traders as an aid to the enforcement of their tax laws. On January 21, 1992, this Court granted petitioners' petition for a writ of certiorari, vacated the Appellate Division's prior order and remanded the case to the Appellate Division for further consideration in light of *Potawatomi* (A17-A18).

On July 9, 1992 the Appellate Division rendered its decision on remand (A13-A16). The Appellate Division observed that while the precise issue of federal preemption presented in this case was not directly before this Court in *Potawatomi*, this Court nevertheless had explicitly addressed the issue in response to a concern by the State of Oklahoma that because of the Indian Tribe's sovereign immunity it would be unable to enforce its tax scheme to collect sales tax from non-Indians doing business at tribal stores. The Appellate Division quoted from this Court's opinion in *Potawatomi* the observation that "under today's decision, States may of course collect the sales tax from cigarette wholesalers, either by seizing unstamped cigarettes off the reservation * * * or by assessing wholesalers who supplied unstamped cigarettes to the tribal stores". 498 US at 514. From this the court concluded that this Court was of the view that not all burdens placed on Indian traders by States attempting to enforce tax schemes aimed at taxing

sales by Indian retailers to non-Indians made on reservations was impermissible (A15). The court then said (A15-A16):

> "The Supreme Court's observations call into question the continued validity of the legal analysis underpinning the Court of Appeals' decision in *Herzog Bros. Trucking* v *State Tax Commn.* (69 NY2d 536, *vacated* 487 US 1212) and again considered by that court upon remand from the Supreme Court and which opinion was the legal underpinning for our holding in this matter (164 AD2d 300, *supra*).
>
> "We now hold that minimal burdens such as are prescribed by the tax scheme promulgated pursuant to 20 NYCRR 335.5 upon Indian traders in collecting sales taxes on sales by Indian retailers to non-Indian purchasers made on Indian reservations are not barred by Federal preemption of the field of regulating trade with Indians (*see*, 25 USC 261 *et seq*)."

The Appellate Division accordingly reversed the order and judgment of the Supreme Court, denied plaintiffs' motions for summary judgment, granted defendants' cross-motions for summary judgment and declared that the challenged regulations had not been shown to be unconstitutional. Respondents thereafter appealed.

By a decision rendered on June 10, 1993, the Court of Appeals reversed (A3-A12). The Court of Appeals held that the challenged regulations imposed obligations upon wholesale Indian traders and were therefore preempted by

federal law (A7-A8). The Court of Appeals read this Court's direction in *Potawatomi* that "States may of course collect the sales tax from cigarette wholesalers * * * by assessing wholesalers who supplied unstamped cigarettes to the tribal stores", 498 US at 514, as "indicat[ing] that the method might somehow be used to retroactively collect taxes unpaid on past sales" (A11). However, the court declined to read the quoted language as establishing the right of States to impose even minimal regulatory burdens on wholesalers supplying Indian retailers as an aid to enforcement of valid State tax laws (A10). The court said in this regard (A10):

> "* * * we do not interpret the Supreme Court's statement [in *Potawatomi*] as altering the established rule stated in *Warren Trading Post Co. v Arizona Tax Commn* (*supra*, 380 US at 690) that Congress has taken the matter of regulating Indian traders so fully in hand that no room remains for state laws imposing additional burdens upon them. The [quoted] language cites none of the relevant decisions in this area and, as interpreted by [petitioners], is contrary to the present state of the law on the subject."

As an alternative holding, the Court of Appeals ruled that to the extent this Court's decisions in *Moe*, *Colville* and *Potawatomi* "may be read as validating the imposition of minimal burdens on Indian retailers and Indian traders" (A11), the tax regulations at issue were barred by federal preemption because in the court's view they imposed "significant" burdens on the wholesalers (A11).

B. The Tax Scheme

Section 471(1) of the New York Tax Law imposes a tax on all cigarettes possessed in this State except where the cigarettes "are sold under such circumstances that this state is without power to impose such tax". The law presumes that all cigarettes within the State are subject to tax until the contrary is established and places upon the possessor the burden of proving nontaxability. The ultimate incidence and liability for the tax is upon the consumer. Tax Law § 471(2).

Payment of the cigarette tax in New York is effected through the use of stamps which are purchased and affixed to packages of unstamped cigarettes by registered stamping agents licensed by the Department of Taxation and Finance. The cigarettes are brought into the State untaxed, and the agents, by purchasing and affixing the stamps to the unstamped packages, make payment of the tax in advance of the products' first sale in New York. Thereafter, the tax is added and collected as a part of the selling price of the cigarettes by each of the entities effecting subsequent sales until it is ultimately added to the retail price and is borne by the consumer. The law provides civil and criminal penalties for the unlawful possession of untaxed cigarettes in the State, Tax Law §§ 481, 1814, 1846, 1847, and details the kinds of records which must be maintained by persons who "possess or transport any unstamped cigarettes upon the public highways, roads or streets of the state". Tax Law § 474.

The regulations which implement the cigarette tax, and which are challenged in these actions, were adopted by the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance on August 29, 1988 and became fully effective on January 1, 1989. The regulations are designed to prevent the loss of an estimated $65 million in cigarette taxes annually by preventing the sale of unstamped cigarettes to non-Indians by retailers at reservation outlets.[4] Broadly, the regulations create a mechanism whereby retail dealers of cigarettes on qualified Indian reservations are permitted to purchase a sufficient quantity of untaxed cigarettes to satisfy the needs of their Indian customers, while at the same time ensuring that if they wish to make sales of cigarettes to non-Indians they have available taxed and stamped product for that purpose. Only reservation retailers who have registered with the Department of Taxation and Finance are permitted to purchase or sell at retail unstamped cigarettes and then only in an amount which is no greater than the maximum legitimate Indian consumption of the reservation on which they are located. 20 NYCRR §§ 335.6 and 335.7. No limit is imposed upon the amount of stamped product which a retail dealer may purchase and sell.

The only portions of the regulations which impose any burdens upon the retailers' cigarette suppliers are 20

[4]As we stated in the petition for certiorari (p 12 n 5), this estimate, which is substantially higher than the estimate used in earlier phases of this litigation, is the result of a study undertaken in early 1993 by the Department of Taxation and Finance's Office of Tax Policy Analysis. In conducting the study the Office of Tax Policy Analysis contacted and obtained information from cigarette agents and suppliers doing business both in and out of New York State. The estimate is based upon the figures supplied. However, because not all of the suppliers contacted cooperated in the study, the actual amount of tax revenue lost to the State is almost certainly higher. It is also estimated that the State loses approximately $35 million in taxes annually because of reservation sales of motor fuel to non-Indians.

NYCRR §§ 335.6(f) and (g) and 335.7(b), (c) and (d).[5] Section 335.6(f) and (g) requires that suppliers making tax free sales of cigarettes to wholesale or retail dealers located on Indian reservations request a copy of the dealers' tax exemption certificate and keep the copy as a means of substantiating the fact that the sale was a valid tax-free transaction. The regulation also requires that suppliers keep accurate records and maintain written evidence of their sales. Section 335.7(b), (c) and (d) provides that prior to each sale and delivery of cigarettes to a qualified Indian reservation the supplier must obtain approval from either the Indian nation or tribe or from the Department of Taxation and Finance regarding the quantity of product which may be delivered and sold without prepayment and collection of the tax.

As described in Notice N-88-53 (JA44a-JA50a), which was sent by the Department of Taxation and Finance to all licensed cigarette agents in this State, as well as to all registered motor fuel and diesel fuel distributors, the preapproval requirements of 20 NYCRR § 335.7(b), (c) and (d) are intended to be satisfied by means of a coupon system whereby each month registered dealers will be sent "Tax Exemption Coupons" by the Department of Taxation and Finance entitling them to receive a predetermined quantity of tax free product. At the time of delivery, the dealer is to complete the tax exemption coupon and submit two copies

[5]Section 335.6(c) does not now have any impact upon cigarette suppliers but could if the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance were to authorize the use of special stamps to identify packages of cigarettes intended for nontaxable sale to qualified Indians. If the use of such stamps is authorized, suppliers who are also cigarette tax agents would bear the minimal burden of affixing the special stamps to those packages of cigarettes intended for sale to qualified Indians.

to the supplier. The supplier keeps one of the copies and within five days forwards the other one to the Department of Taxation and Finance. The amount of tax free product delivered may not exceed the preprinted amount authorized by the coupon. Thus, the focus and principal burden of the regulatory scheme lies with and falls upon the Indian nation or tribe and the reservation retailer. The only burden imposed upon the supplier is a minimal one relating to recordkeeping and reporting.

Summary of Argument

I. The holding of the Court of Appeals that the Indian trader statutes bar the State from imposing minimal burdens on Indian traders to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indian purchasers of goods from Indian retailers is in direct conflict with the decisions of this Court affirming the right of the States to do so. Because the regulations at issue in this case do not target the wholesalers or the tribes or their members for payment of any tax, but properly seek only to require the wholesalers' cooperation in preventing the avoidance of tax by the retailers' non-Indian customers, the regulations should not have been held by the Court of Appeals to be barred by the Indian trader statutes.

II. The Court of Appeals' alternative holding, that the challenged regulations are impermissible because they place "signinificant" burdens on wholesalers, is incorrect. The challenged regulations require only that cigarette distributors keep accurate records of their sales and limit their sales of tax free cigarettes to an amount no greater than the maximum legitimate Indian consumption of the reservation. This Court's relevant decisions make clear that such minimal burdens are permissible.

ARGUMENT

POINT I

The Court of Appeals erred in holding that the challenged regulations are barred by federal preemption.

The conclusion of the Court of Appeals that the Indian trader statutes bar the State from imposing minimal burdens on Indian traders to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indian purchasers of goods from Indian retailers is founded upon a misreading and misapplication of this Court's decisions in *Moe v Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes*, 425 US 463 (1976), *Washington v Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation*, 447 US 134 (1980), and *Oklahoma Tax Comm'n. v Citizen Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe of Oklahoma*, 498 US 505 (1991), the case which this Court required the Appellate Division to consider on remand. In those cases this Court made plain that States are free to impose minimal burdens on Indian traders to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indian purchasers of goods from Indian retailers. Nevertheless, the Court of Appeals, citing to its own decision in *Herzog Brothers Trucking*, where the court had held that the preemptive effect of the Indian trader statutes, 25 USC § 261 *et seq.*, was such as to preclude the State from imposing *any* burden on Indian traders, no matter how minimal, ruled that the challenged tax scheme was invalid because it imposed obligations on Indian traders. The Court of Appeals' holding is in direct conflict with the decisions of this Court cited above and should be reversed.

In *Moe*, this Court upheld the right of the State of Montana to require Indian tribal sellers of cigarettes to collect a

state sales tax imposed upon non-Indian purchasers of cigarettes. The tax scheme, which in this respect is similar to that of New York, required the seller to pay the tax to the wholesaler and then add it to the purchase price of the cigarettes for payment by the ultimate consumer. *See, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes v Moe*, 392 F Supp 1297, 1308 (D Mont 1975).

In approving the Montana law, this Court emphasized the fact that the cigarette tax had been validly imposed and observed that without the expedient of having the retailer collect the tax from the non-Indian purchasers "wholesale violations of the law by the latter class will go virtually unchecked". 425 US at 483. The Court distinguished *Warren Trading Post Co. v Arizona Tax Commission*, 380 US 685 (1965), which the court below cited as controlling, on the ground that the tax in that case, a gross income tax imposed on the on-reservation sales by a trader to reservation Indians, had been imposed directly on the seller and could, therefore, have put additional financial burdens on the trader or the Indians with whom it dealt. 380 US at 691. This, the Court held, "would to a substantial extent frustrate the evident congressional purpose of ensuring that no burden shall be imposed upon Indian traders for trading with Indians on reservations". *Id.* In contrast, the collection requirement of the Montana law was characterized by the Court as "a minimal burden designed to avoid the likelihood that in its absence non-Indians purchasing from the tribal seller will avoid payment of a concededly lawful tax". 425 US at 483. The quoted language, from *Warren Trading Post Co.*, was held not to apply. 425 US at 482.

Moe expressly left open the question of whether the "minimal burden" approved with respect to Indian retailers

could similarly be imposed upon the Indians' distributors, one step further back in the chain of distribution. *See*, 425 US at 468 n 6. However, the conclusion that it can becomes manifest when *Moe* is read in conjunction with *Colville*, which this Court decided four years later.

In *Colville*, this Court upheld the right of the State of Washington to impose minimal regulatory burdens on the operators of tribal smokeshops in order to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indian purchasers of cigarettes at the smokeshops. Quite significantly, although the operators of the smokeshops were federally licensed Indian traders, *see*, *Confederated Tribes of Colville v State of Washington*, 446 F Supp 1339, 1347 (ED Wash 1978), and thus subject to the Indian trader laws, this Court nevertheless upheld the right of the State of Washington to compel the operators to comply with the State's cigarette tax laws, which required them to purchase and affix tax stamps to packages of cigarettes intended for sale to non-Indians, and also required them to keep detailed records of their taxable and nontaxable sales. In ruling as it did, this Court made clear that federal Indian law, including the Indian trader statutes, did not preempt the Washington State tax scheme. The Court said, 447 US at 155:

> "We do not believe that principles of federal Indian law, whether stated in terms of pre-emption, tribal self-government, or otherwise, authorize Indian tribes thus to market an exemption from state taxation to persons who would normally do their business elsewhere."

Equally significant is the further holding of the Court that the State of Washington had the power to seize shipments of

unstamped cigarettes traveling to the reservation from out-of-state wholesalers even though the sales by the wholesalers to the tribal businesses were concededly exempt from State taxation and no State tax was due while the cigarettes were in transit. 447 US at 161-162. This holding is in sharp contrast to the conclusion of the Court of Appeals, both here and in *Herzog Brothers Trucking*, that the Indian trader laws in and of themselves place every transaction between an Indian tribe and its supplier beyond the regulatory authority of the States.

Whatever doubts the lower court had, notwithstanding *Colville*, regarding the viability of State tax schemes which employ an Indians' supplier as an aid to enforcement should have been laid to rest when, in February, 1991, this Court decided *Potawatomi*. In that case, the Citizen Band of Potawatomi Indian Tribe (hereinafter "Tribe" or "Potawatomis") filed suit in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma to enjoin an assessment by the Oklahoma Tax Commission seeking $2.7 million for taxes on cigarette sales occurring between 1982 and 1986 at a convenience store owned and operated by the Tribe on land held in trust for it by the Federal Government. Among other questions before this Court was whether the Potawatomis' sovereign immunity prevented the Tribe from being liable for the collection of State taxes on the sale of cigarettes to nonmembers of the Tribe.

Citing to *Colville* and *Moe*, this Court answered this question in the negative, observing that "[a]lthough the doctrine of tribal sovereign immunity applies to the Potawatomis, that doctrine does not excuse a tribe from all obligations to assist in the collection of validly imposed state sales taxes". 498 US at 512. Of signal importance to

the issue raised here, however, is that in response to Oklahoma's complaint that the Tribe's sovereign immunity would prevent it from enforcing its right to tribal assistance guaranteed by such cases as *Moe* and *Colville*, the Court stated that the State could, under its decision, secure collection of the taxes by pursuing the Indians' wholesalers. The Court said, 498 US at 514:

> "In view of our conclusion with respect to sovereign immunity of the Tribe from suit by the State, Oklahoma complains that, in effect, decisions such as *Moe* and *Colville* give them a right without any remedy. There is no doubt that sovereign immunity bars the State from pursuing the most efficient remedy, but we are not persuaded that it lacks any adequate alternatives. We have never held that individual agents or officers of a tribe are not liable for damages in actions brought by the State. See *Ex parte Young*, 209 U.S. 123 (1908). And under today's decision, *States may of course collect the sales tax from cigarette wholesalers, either by seizing unstamped cigarettes off the reservation, Colville, supra*, [447 US] at 161-162, *or by assessing wholesalers who supplied unstamped cigarettes to the tribal stores, City Vending of Muskogee, Inc. v Oklahoma Tax Comm'n*, 898 F. 2d 122 (CAlO 1990). * * *". Emphasis added.

The Court of Appeals, based upon its earlier analysis in *Herzog Brothers Trucking*, read this passage narrowly. The court stated that while the remedies discussed "might somehow be used to retroactively collect taxes unpaid on past due sales" (A11), *Potawatomi* did not permit the State to exercise regulatory authority over Indian traders "prospectively" to aid in the enforcement of its tax laws (A10). But the distinction drawn by the Court of Appeals is fallacious. If the Indian trader laws represent a bar to the exercise by the States of regulatory authority over Indian traders in their dealings with their Indian customers, it should not matter whether that authority is exercised prospectively or retrospectively. It seems clear to us that by instructing in *Potawatomi* that States have the right to collect sales tax from an Indian tribe's cigarette wholesaler by filing assessments against the wholesaler, this Court plainly was indicating that not all burdens placed upon Indian traders by States attempting to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indians doing business on Indian reservations are impermissible.

This not only makes good sense, it is sound policy. The Indian trader laws were enacted for the protection of Indian tribes in their dealings with traders. They were never intended to provide Indian retailers with a competitive advantage over their non-Indian competitors by enabling them to offer nonmembers an exemption from State taxes to which they are properly subject. Nor were they intended to stand as a barrier to the exercise by the States of their legitimate right to protect themselves against the evasion of taxes by non-Indians doing business at reservation outlets. The regulations at issue in this case are designed to overcome the vexing problem of reservation retailers failing to collect taxes due on their sales of cigarettes to their non-Indian customers. The regulations accomplish this design by limiting the quantity of tax exempt cigarettes which can be purchased for resale by the retailers to an amount no greater than the maximum legitimate Indian consumption of the reservation on which the outlet is located and imposing upon the suppliers minimal burdens relating to record keeping and reporting. Under the unimpeachable authority of

Moe, *Colville* and *Potawatomi*, such minimal burdens are clearly permissible.

Central Machinery Co. v Arizona Tax Commission, 448 US 160 (1980), on which the respondents will undoubtedly rely, does not lead to a different result. In *Central Machinery Co.* this Court ruled that the State of Arizona could not impose a tax against the seller of goods when the sale was made to a tribal enterprise on an Indian reservation. The tax was a "transaction privilege tax" on the privilege of doing business in the State of Arizona. 448 US at 161-162. The amount of the tax was added as a separate item to the price of goods sold and was actually borne by the tribal enterprise. The Court ruled that its decision in *Warren Trading Post Co.* was controlling and held that the Indian trader statutes preempted the asserted State tax.

Although this Court couched its decision in *Central Machinery Co.* in terms of federal preemption, it is clear that the basis of the Court's ruling was not the mere existence and breadth of the Indian trader statutes, but the underlying fact that the Arizona tax, which was characterized by the Court as being "precisely the same tax as was involved in *Warren Trading Post Co.*", 448 US at 164 n 3, actually had as its target the tribal enterprise and its supplier and could, therefore " 'disturb and disarrange the statutory plan Congress set up in order to protect Indians against prices deemed unfair or unreasonable by the Indian Commission' ". *Id.*, quoting from *Warren Trading Post Co.*, 380 US at 691. In contrast, just 17 days earlier in *Colville*,[6] this Court let stand the Washington State tax scheme which,

[6]*Colville* was decided by this Court on June 10, 1980; *Central Machinery Co.* was decided on June 27, 1980.

while imposing regulatory burdens on federal Indian traders, did not target the traders or the tribe or its members for payment of the tax. The Court of Appeals wholly ignored this crucial distinction when it held that the regulations at issue were preempted simply because they placed an obligation upon wholesale Indian traders.

But as this Court's decisions make clear, in determining the preemptive impact of the Indian trader statutes, the critical question is not merely whether the transaction sought to be regulated is one between an Indian trader and an Indian, as the Court of Appeals mistakenly held, but whether the regulation is intended to further the important State interest of ensuring that otherwise taxable transactions are taxed. In *Central Machinery Co.*, for example, the tax at issue was aimed directly at the Indian trader, which could, and did, pass the tax along to the Tribe. 448 US at 162. In *Colville*, quite to the contrary, neither the Indian trader nor the Tribe were targeted for payment of the tax, which, as here, was due only from the Tribe's non-member customers. We submit that the formalistic and mechanical approach adopted by the Court of Appeals to the effect that State regulation of the respondents is impermissible simply because they are wholesale Indian traders represents a fundamental misunderstanding of this Court's precedents which should explicitly be corrected.

In the area of cigarette taxation, with which this case is concerned, this Court has declared in *Moe*, *Colville* and *Potawatomi*, that the interests of the States in seeking to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indian purchasers of cigarettes at reservation outlets far outweighs the interests of either the tribes or their distributors in avoiding the minimal burdens of recordkeeping and reporting. Simply

stated, Indian tribes do not have any governmental interest or enjoy any right to generate business at reservation outlets by marketing to nonmembers the tribe's exemption from taxation. The States do, however, have an interest in collecting taxes from their citizens in order to fund the government.

The regulations at issue in this case do not target either the wholesalers or the tribes or their members for payment of any tax, but properly seek only to require the wholesalers' cooperation in preventing the avoidance of tax by the retailers' non-Indian customers. Under the controlling authority of *Moe*, *Colville* and *Potawatomi*, we submit that federal preemption does not bar the State from enforcing the challenged regulations. The Court of Appeals should so have held.

POINT II

The Court of Appeals erred in holding that the challenged regulations place "significant" burdens on wholesalers.

The Court of Appeals' alternative holding (A11-A12), that the challenged regulations are impermissible because they place "significant" burdens on wholesalers, is similarly incorrect. As affects wholesalers, the challenged regulations are quite limited in their scope. They require no more than that cigarette distributors making tax free sales of cigarettes to wholesale or retail dealers located on Indian reservations obtain and keep a copy of the dealers' tax exemption certificate and keep accurate records and maintain written evidence of their sales (20 NYCRR 335.6[f] and

[g]), and obtain from the dealer and forward to the Department of Taxation and Finance the "Tax Exemption Coupons" through which it is contemplated that the limitations on tax exempt sales will be satisfied (*see*, pp 11-13, *supra*).[7] We submit that such minimal impositions are quite reasonable as a means of assuring that non-Indians dealing with reservation retailers do not escape their obligation to pay State taxes legitimately imposed upon them. The challenged regulations require only that wholesalers keep a record of their taxable and tax exempt sales as an adjunct of the State's unquestioned right to require the collection and remition of taxes on sales to non-Indians. Such a "burden" infringes upon no legitimate tribal interest and conflicts with no federal law.

Indeed, in *Colville*, this Court approved *in toto* Washington State's much more onerous recordkeeping requirements, which required smokeshop operators not only to record and retain for State inspection the number and dollar volume of taxable sales to nonmembers of the Tribe, but to record and retain "the names of all Indian purchasers, their tribal affiliations, the Indian reservations within which sales are made and the dollar amount and dates of sales". 447 US at 159. Since the operators of the smokeshops in *Colville* failed to present any evidence on the question of whether the requirements of the law were overly burdensome, it was this Court's holding that the Tribes failed to meet their burden of showing that the challenged tax scheme was not reasonably necessary as a means of preventing fraudulent transactions.

[7]We note in this regard that respondent Milhelm, as a licenced New York State cigarette tax agent, already files monthly cigarette tax returns with the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance on which it reports the quantity of its sales of unstamped cigarettes within the State. *See*, Record on Appeal, pp 58, 68.

447 US at 160. Here, too, there is no evidence on the question of whether the requirements of the New York law are not reasonably necessary to prevent the avoidance of tax by non-Indians doing business at reservation outlets. Thus, the Court of Appeals was clearly in error when it ruled that the challenged regulations exceeded the limits of permissible State action established by this Court's decisions in *Potawatomi*, *Moe* and *Colville*.

Furthermore, the Court of Appeals totally mischaracterized the nature of New York's regulatory scheme by asserting that "[t]he tax scheme requires wholesale distributors to prepay taxes on all cigarettes delivered on the reservations in excess of the predetermined maximum amount and, with respect to those cigarettes, *imposes a sales tax on Indian retailers*" (A11; emphasis added). The State is not here imposing a tax upon Indian retailers.

The regulations at issue in this case were specifically designed to avoid any prepayment of tax on cigarettes sold at wholesale to tribal retailers which are intended to be resold to Indians (*see*, Affidavit in Opposition of Frank Munoz, Record on Appeal, pp 131-133; Affidavit in Opposition of William Collins, Record on Appeal, pp 252-255). They accomplish this design by authorizing tribal retailers to purchase a sufficient quantity of untaxed cigarettes to satisfy the maximum probable demand of the qualified Indian consumers of the reservation on which the tax free sale is made. 20 NYCRR 335.6 and 335.7.[8]

The amount of tax free product which may be purchased by the tribal retailers is determined in one of two ways. If

[8]*See* footnote 3, page 3, *supra*.

the Indian Tribe or Nation on whose reservation the sales take place regulates, licenses or controls the sale and distribution of cigarettes within the reservation, the Department of Taxation and Finance will determine the amount of tax free product which may be purchased by using such documentary evidence and/or statistical information relating to the probable demand on the reservation as the Tribe or Nation may submit. 20 NYCRR 335.7(d)(2)(i). If the Tribe or Nation does not regulate the sale and distribution of cigarettes within the reservation, or does not submit evidence relating to probable demand, the Department of Taxation and Finance will calculate the demand "based upon the New York average consumption per capita, as compiled for the most recently completed calendar or fiscal year, multiplied by the number of enrolled members of the affected nation or tribe * * *". 20 NYCRR 335.7(d)(2)(ii). In either case there is absolutely no tax or precollection burden with respect to any sales of cigarettes which are purchased for resale to qualified Indian consumers.

The fact that there is a precollection requirement with respect to the retailers' sales to non-Indians does not mean that the retailers are being taxed. As this Court's decisions make clear, such a precollection requirement with respect to cigarettes intended for sale to non-Indians does not amount to taxation of Indians, but represents the legitimate assertion by the State of its long recognized authority to employ Indian Tribes and retailers, and now their suppliers, "to assist in the collection [from non-Indians] of validly imposed state sales taxes". *Oklahoma Tax Comm'n v Citizen Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe of Oklahoma*, *supra*, 498 US at 512; *see also Washington v Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation*, *supra*, 447 US 134; *Moe v Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes*, *supra*, 425 US 463, 483 (Col-

lection requirement of Montana law in *Moe*, held to be not a "tax", but "a minimal burden designed to avoid the likelihood that in its absence non-Indians purchasing from the tribal seller will avoid payment of a concededly lawful tax"). The Court of Appeals' characterization of the regulatory scheme as "impos[ing] a sales tax on Indian retailers" is clearly in error in this fundamental respect.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated, the order of the Court of Appeals should be reversed.

Dated: Albany, New York
December 14, 1993

Respectfully Submitted,

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APPENDIX
Statutory and Regulatory Provisions Involved.

25 USC:

§ 261. Power to appoint traders with Indians

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs shall have the sole power and authority to appoint traders to the Indian tribes and to make such rules and regulations as he may deem just and proper specifying the kind and quantity of goods and the prices at which such goods shall be sold to the Indians. (Aug. 15, 1876, c. 289 § 5, 19 Stat. 200.)

§ 262. Persons permitted to trade with Indians

Any person desiring to trade with the Indians on any Indian reservation shall, upon establishing the fact, to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that he is a proper person to engage in such trade, be permitted to do so under such rules and regulations as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs may prescribe for the protection of said Indians.
(Mar. 3, 1901, c. 832, § 1, 31 Stat. 1066, Mar. 3, 1903, c. 994, § 10, 32 Stat. 1009.)

§ 263. Prohibition of trade by President

The President is authorized, whenever in his opinion the public interest may require the same, to prohibit the introduction of goods, or of any particular article, into the country belonging to any Indian tribe, and to direct all licenses to trade with such tribe to be revoked, and all applications therefor to be rejected. No trader to any other tribe shall, so

long as such prohibition may continue, trade with any Indians of or for the tribe against which such prohibition is issued.

§ 264. Trading without license; white persons as clerks

Any person other than an Indian of the full blood who shall attempt to reside in the Indian country, or on any Indian reservation, as a trader, or to introduce goods, or to trade therein, without such license, shall forfeit all merchandise offered for sale to the Indians or found in his possession, and shall moreover be liable to a penalty of $500; *Provided*, That this section shall not apply to any person residing among or trading with the Choctaws, Cherokees, Chickasaws, Creeks, or Seminoles, commonly called the Five Civilized Tribes, residing in said Indian country, and belonging to the Union Agency therein; *And provided further*, That no white person shall be employed as a clerk by any Indian trader, except such as trade with said Five Civilized Tribes, unless first licensed so to do by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, under and in conformity to regulations to be established by the Secretary of the Interior.

New York Tax Law:

§ 471. Imposition of cigarette tax

1. There is hereby imposed and shall be paid a tax on all cigarettes possessed in the state by any person for sale on and after June first, nineteen hundred ninety-three, except that no tax shall be imposed on cigarettes sold under such circumstances that this state is without power to impose such tax or sold to the United States or sold to or by a voluntary unincorporated organization of the armed forces

of the United States operating a place for the sale of goods pursuant to regulations promulgated by the appropriate executive agency of the United States, to the extent provided in such regulations and policy statements of such an agency applicable to such sales. Such tax on cigarettes shall be the at the rate of twenty-eight cents for each ten cigarettes or fraction thereof, provided, however, that if a package of cigarettes contains more than twenty cigarettes, the rate of tax on the cigarettes in such package in excess of twenty shall be fourteen cents for each five cigarettes or fraction thereof. Such tax is intended to be imposed upon only one sale of the same package of cigarettes. It shall be presumed that all cigarettes within the state are subject to tax until the contrary is established, and the burden of proof that any cigarettes are not taxable hereunder shall be upon the person in possession thereof.

2. It is intended that the ultimate incidence of and liability for the tax shall be upon the consumer, and that any agent or dealer who shall pay the tax to the tax commission shall collect the tax from the purchaser or consumer. Except as hereinafter provided, the tax shall be advanced and paid by the agent. The agent shall be liable for the collection and payment of the tax on cigarettes imposed by this article and shall pay the tax to the tax commission by purchasing, under such regulations as it shall prescribe, adhesive stamps of such designs and denominations as it shall prescribe. The tax on cigarettes may also be paid by or through the use of metering machines if the tax commission so prescribes. Agents, located within or without the state, shall purchase stamps and affix such stamps in the manner prescribed to packages of cigarettes to be sold within the state, in which case any dealer subsequently receiving such stamped packages of cigarettes will not be required to purchase and affix

stamps on such packages of cigarettes. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the tax commission may by regulation provide that the tax on cigarettes imposed by this article shall be collected without the use of stamps.

3. The amount of taxes advanced and paid by the agent as hereinabove provided shall be added to and collected as part of the sales price of the cigarettes.

§ 474. Records to be kept; examination

1. Every person who shall possess or transport any unstamped cigarettes upon the public highways, roads or streets of the state, shall be required to have in his actual possession invoices or delivery tickets for such cigarettes. Such invoices or delivery tickets shall show the name and address of the consignor or seller, the name and address of the consignee or purchaser, the quantity and brands of the cigarettes transported, and the name and address of the person who has or shall assume the payment of the tax. The absence of such invoices or delivery tickets shall be prima facie evidence that such person is a dealer in cigarettes in this state and subject to the provisions of this article.

2. Every person who shall possess or transport more than two hundred fifty cigars or more than five pounds of tobacco upon the public highways, roads or streets of the state, shall be required to have in his actual possession invoices or delivery tickets for such tobacco products. Such invoices or delivery tickets shall show the name and address of the consignor or seller, the name and address of the consignee or purchaser, the quantity and brands of the tobacco products transported, and the name and address of the

person who has or shall assume the payment of the tax and the wholesale price or the tax paid or payable. The absence of such invoices or delivery tickets shall be prima facie evidence that such person is a dealer in tobacco products in this state and subject to the requirements of this article.

3. Every dealer or distributor or employee thereof, or other person acting on behalf of a dealer or distributor, who shall possess or transport more than fifty cigars or more than one pound of tobacco upon the public highways, roads or streets of the state, shall be required to have in his actual possession invoices or delivery tickets for such tobacco products. Such invoices or delivery tickets shall show the name and address of the consignor or seller, the name and address of the consignee or purchaser, the quantity and brands of the tobacco products transported, and the name and address of the person who has or shall assume the payment of the tax and the wholesale price or the tax paid or payable. The absence of such invoices or delivery tickets shall be prima facie evidence that the tax imposed by this article on tobacco products has not been paid and is due and owing.

4. At the time of delivering cigarettes to any person each agent or wholesale dealer, and at the time of delivering tobacco products to any person each distributor or wholesale dealer of tobacco products, shall make a true duplicate invoice showing the date of delivery, the number of packages and number of cigarettes contained therein, in each shipment of cigarettes delivered, and the items and quantity and wholesale price of each item in each shipment of tobacco products delivered, and the name of the purchaser to whom delivery is made, and shall retain the same for a period of three years subject to the use and inspection

of the commissioner of taxation and finance. Each dealer shall procure and retain invoices showing the number of packages and number of cigarettes contained therein, in each shipment of cigarettes received by him, and the items and quantity and wholesale price of each item in each shipment of tobacco products received by him, the date thereof, and the name of the shipper, and shall retain the same for a period of three years subject to the use and inspection of the commissioner of taxation and finance. The commissioner of taxation and finance by regulation may provide that whenever cigarettes or tobacco products are shipped into the state, the railroad company, express company, trucking company or other public carrier transporting any shipment thereof shall file with the commissioner of taxation and finance a copy of the freight bill within ten days after the delivery in the state of each shipment. All dealers shall maintain and keep for a period of three years such other records of cigarettes or tobacco products received, sold or delivered within the state as may be required by the commissioner of taxation and finance. The commissioner of taxation and finance is hereby authorized to examine the books, papers, invoices and other records of any person in possession, control or occupancy of any premises where cigarettes or tobacco products are placed, stored, sold or offered for sale, and the equipment of any such person pertaining to the stamping of cigarettes or the sale and delivery of cigarettes or tobacco products taxable under this article, as well as the stock of cigarettes or tobacco products in any such premises or vehicle. To verify the accuracy of the tax imposed and assessed by this article, each such person is hereby directed and required to give to the commissioner of taxation and finance or his duly authorized representatives, the means, facilities and opportunity for such examinations as are herein provided for and required.

(As amended L.1989, c. 61, § 79.)

§ 481. Penalties and interest

1. (a)(i)(A) An agent or distributor or other person treated as a distributor pursuant to section four hundred seventy-one-d who or which fails to file a return or to pay any tax within the time required by or pursuant to this article (determined with regard to any extension of time for filing or paying) shall be subject to a penalty of ten per centum of the amount of tax determined to be due as provided in this article plus one per centum of such amount for each month or fraction thereof during which such failure continues after the expiration of the first month after such return was required to be filed or such tax became due, not exceeding thirty per centum in the aggregate.

(B) If a tax on cigarettes or on tobacco products under this article is not paid when due by any other person, the person liable for the payment of such tax shall be subject to a penalty of fifty per centum of the amount of such tax determined to be due as provided in this article plus one per centum of such amount for each month or fraction thereof during which such failure to pay continues after the expiration of the first month after such tax became due.

(C) In the case of a failure to file such return within sixty days of the date prescribed for filing of such return by or pursuant to this article (determined with regard to any extension of time for filing), the penalty imposed by this paragraph shall not be less than the lesser of one hundred dollars or one hundred per centum of the amount required to be shown as tax on such return. For the purpose of the preceding sentence, the amount of tax required to be shown

on the return shall be reduced by the amount of any part of the tax which is paid on or before the date prescribed for payment of the tax and by the amount of any credit against the tax which may be claimed upon the return.

(ii) If any amount of tax is not paid on or before the last date prescribed in this article for payment, interest on such amount at the underpayment rate set by the commissioner of taxation and finance pursuant to subdivision twenty-sixth of section one hundred seventy-one of this chapter shall be paid for the period from such last date to the date paid, whether or not any extension of time for payment was granted. Interest under this subparagraph shall not be paid if the amount thereof is less than one dollar.

(iii) If the tax commission determines that such failure or delay was due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, it shall remit all or part of such penalty. The tax commission shall promulgate rules and regulations as to what constitutes reasonable cause.

(iv) If the failure to pay any tax within the time required by or pursuant to this article is due to fraud, in lieu of the penalties and interest provided for in subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of this paragraph, there shall be added to the tax (A) a penalty of fifty per centum of the amount of tax due, plus (B) interest on such unpaid tax at the underpayment rate set by the commissioner of taxation and finance pursuant to subdivision twenty-sixth of section one hundred seventy-one of this chapter for the period beginning on the last day prescribed by this article for the payment of such tax (determined without regard to any extension of time for paying) and ending on the day on which such tax is paid, plus (C) for the period beginning on the last day prescribed by this

article for the payment of such tax (determined without regard to any extension of time for paying) and ending on the day the amount of tax due is finally determined or, if earlier, on the day on which such tax is paid, an amount equal to fifty per centum of the interest payable under clause (B) of this subparagraph on that portion of the unpaid tax which is attributable to fraud.

(v) The penalties and interest provided for in this paragraph shall be determined, assessed, collected and paid in the same manner as the taxes imposed by this article and shall be disposed of as hereinafter provided with respect to moneys derived from the tax. Interest under this paragraph shall be compounded daily.

(b) In addition to any other penalty imposed by this article, the commissioner of taxation and finance may impose a penalty of not more than one hundred dollars for each two hundred cigarettes or fraction thereof in excess of two thousand cigarettes in unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages in the possession or under the control of any person. In addition, the commissioner may impose a penalty of not more than fifty dollars for each fifty cigars or one pound of tobacco or fraction thereof in excess of two hundred fifty cigars or five pounds of tobacco in the possession or under the control of any person and a penalty of not more than one hundred dollars for each fifty cigars or pound of tobacco or fraction thereof in excess of five hundred cigars or ten pounds of tobacco in the possession or under the control of any person, with respect to which the tobacco products tax has not been paid or assumed by a distributor or tobacco products dealer; provided, however, that any such penalty imposed shall not exceed five thousand dollars in the aggregate. The commissioner may impose a penalty

of not more than fifty dollars for each fifty cigars or one pound of tobacco, or fraction thereof, in excess of fifty cigars or one pound of tobacco in the possession or under the control of any tobacco products dealer or distributor appointed by the commissioner, and a penalty of not more than one hundred dollars for each fifty cigars or pound of tobacco, or fraction thereof, in excess of two hundred fifty cigars or five pounds of tobacco in the possession or under the control of any such dealer or distributor, with respect to which the tobacco products tax has not been paid or assumed by a distributor or a tobacco products dealer; provided, however, that any such penalty imposed shall not exceed ten thousand dollars in the aggregate. Any penalty provided for in this paragraph shall be determined as provided in section four hundred seventy-eight of this chapter, and may be reviewed only pursuant to such section. Such penalty shall be collected in the same manner as the taxes imposed by this article. The commissioner of taxation and finance, in his discretion, may remit all or part of such penalty. Such penalty shall be paid to the department of taxation and finance and disposed of as hereinafter provided with respect to moneys derived from the tax.

2. (a) The possession within this state of more than four hundred cigarettes in unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages or more than two hundred fifty cigars or more than five pounds of tobacco by any person other than an agent or distributor, as the case may be, at any one time shall be presumptive evidence that such cigarettes or tobacco products are subject to tax as provided by this article.

(b) Nothing in this section shall apply to common or contract carriers or warehousemen while engaged in lawfully transporting or storing tobacco products or unstamped

packages of cigarettes as merchandise, nor to any employee of such carrier or warehouseman acting within the scope of his employment, nor to public officers or employees in the performance of their official duties requiring possession or control of tobacco products or unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages of cigarettes, nor to temporary incidental possession by employees or agents of persons lawfully entitled to possession, nor to persons whose possession is for the purpose of aiding police officers in performing their duties.

3. For purposes of this chapter, the certificate of the commissioner of taxation and finance to the effect that a tax or fee imposed by this article has not been paid, that a return required by or under the provisions of this article has not been filed, or that information has not been supplied, as required by or under the provisions of this article, or that a bond or other security required by or pursuant to the provisions of this article has not been filed, or that books, accounts, records, memoranda, documents or papers have not been supplied as required by or pursuant to the authority of this article, or that a retail dealer or vending machine owner or operator is not currently or validly registered as required by this article shall be prima facie evidence that such tax or fee has not been paid, such return not filed, such information not supplied, such bond or other security not filed, that such books, accounts, records, memoranda, documents or papers have not been supplied, or that such retail dealer or vending machine owner or operator is not currently or validly registered.

4. Cross-reference: For criminal penalties, see article thirty-seven of this chapter.

§1814. Cigarette and tobacco products tax

(a) Attempts to evade or defeat tax.—(1) Any person who willfully attempts in any manner to evade or defeat any tax imposed by article twenty of this chapter or the payment thereof shall, in addition to other penalties provided by law, be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) Any person who willfully attempts in any manner to evade or defeat the taxes imposed by article twenty of this chapter or payment thereof on (i) twenty thousand cigarettes or more (ii) twenty-two thousand cigars or more or (iii) four hundred forty pounds of tobacco or more or has previously been convicted two or more times of a violation of paragraph one of this subdivision shall be guilty of a class E felony.

(b) Willful failure to file a return or report, or pay tax.—Any person required under article twenty of this chapter to pay or make a return or report, who willfully fails to pay such tax or make such return or report, at the time or times so required, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(c) Fraudulent returns, reports, statements or other documents.—(1) Any person who willfully makes and subscribes any return, report, statement or other document which is required to be filed with or furnished to the commissioner of taxation and finance or to any person, pursuant to article twenty of this chapter, which he does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) Any person who willfully delivers or discloses to the commissioner of taxation and finance or to any person pursuant to article twenty of this chapter, any list, return, report, account, statement or other document known by him to be fraudulent or to be false as to any material matter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(3) For purposes of this section, the omission by any person of any material matter with intent to deceive shall constitute the delivery or disclosure of a document known by him to be fraudulent or to be false as to any material matter.

(d) Any person, other than an agent so authorized by the tax commission, who possesses or transports for the purpose of sale any unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages of cigarettes subject to tax imposed by section four hundred seventy-one of this chapter, or who sells or offers for sale unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages of cigarettes in violation of the provisions of article twenty of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(e) Any person, other than an agent so authorized by the tax commission, who willfully possesses or transports for the purpose of sale twenty thousand or more cigarettes subject to the tax imposed by section four hundred seventy-one of this chapter in any unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages or who willfully sells or offers for sale twenty thousand or more cigarettes in any unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages in violation of article twenty of this chapter shall be guilty of a class E felony.

(f) For the purposes of this section, the possession or transportation within this state by any person, other than an agent, at any one time of five thousand or more cigarettes in unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages shall be presumptive evidence that such cigarettes are possessed or transported for the purpose of sale and are subject to the tax imposed by section four hundred seventy-one of this chapter. With respect to such possession or transportation any provisions of article twenty of this chapter providing for a time period during which a use tax imposed by such article may be paid on unstamped cigarettes or unlawfully or improperly stamped cigarettes or during which such cigarettes may be returned to an agent shall not apply. The possession within this state of more than four hundred cigarettes in unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages by any person other than an agent at any one time shall be presumptive evidence that such cigarettes are subject to tax as provided by article twenty of this chapter.

(g) Nothing in this section shall apply to common or contract carriers or warehousemen while engaged in lawfully transporting or storing unstamped packages of cigarettes as merchandise, or lawfully transporting or storing tobacco products, nor to any employee of such carrier or warehouseman acting within the scope of his employment, nor to public officers or employees in the performance of their official duties requiring possession or control of unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages of cigarettes or possession or control of tobacco products, nor to temporary incidental possession by employees or agents of persons lawfully entitled to possession, nor to persons whose possession is for the purpose of aiding police officers in performing their duties.

(h) Any willful act or omission, other than those described in subdivision (a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g),(i) or (j) of this section, by any person which constitutes a violation of any provision of article twenty of this chapter shall constitute a misdemeanor.

(i) Any person who falsely or fraudulently makes, alters or counterfeits any stamp prescribed by the tax commission under the provisions of article twenty of this chapter, or causes or procures to be falsely or fraudulently made, altered or counterfeited any such stamp, or knowingly and willfully utters, purchases, passes or tenders as true any such false, altered or counterfeited stamp, or knowingly and willfully possesses any cigarettes in packages bearing any such false, altered or counterfeited stamp, and any person who knowingly and willfully makes, causes to be made, purchases or receives any device for forging or counterfeiting any stamp, prescribed by the tax commission under the provisions of article twenty of this chapter, or who knowingly and willfully possesses any such device, shall be guilty of a class E felony. For the purposes of this subdivision, the words "stamp prescribed by the tax commission" shall include a stamp, impression or imprint made by a metering machine, the design of which has been approved by such commission.

(j)(1) Any dealer, other than a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance under article twenty of this chapter, who shall knowingly transport or have in his custody, possession or under his control more than ten pounds of tobacco or more than five hundred cigars upon which the taxes imposed by article twenty of this chapter have not been assumed or paid by a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance

under article twenty of this chapter, or other person treated as a distributor pursuant to section four hundred seventy-one-d of this chapter, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or by a term of imprisonment not to exceed thirty days.

(2) Any person, other than a dealer or a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance under article twenty of this chapter, who shall knowingly transport or have in his custody, possession or under his control more than fifteen pounds of tobacco or more than seven hundred fifty cigars upon which the taxes imposed by article twenty of this chapter have not been assumed or paid by the distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance under article twenty of this chapter, or other person treated as a distributor pursuant to section four hundred seventy-one-d of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or by a term of imprisonment not to exceed thirty days.

(3) Any person, other than a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance under article twenty of this chapter, who shall knowingly transport or have in his custody, possession or under his control twenty-five hundred or more cigars or fifty or more pounds of tobacco upon which the taxes imposed by article twenty of this chapter have not been assumed or paid by a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance under article twenty of this chapter, or other person treated as a distributor pursuant to section four hundred seventy-one-d of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Provided further, that any person who has twice been convicted under this subdivision shall be guilty of a class E felony for any

subsequent violation of this section, regardless of the amount of tobacco products involved in such violation.

(4) For purposes of this subdivision, such person shall knowingly transport or have in his custody, possession or under his control tobacco or cigars on which such taxes have not been assumed or paid by a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance where such person has knowledge of the requirement of the tax on tobacco products and, where to his knowledge, such taxes have not been assumed or paid on such tobacco products by a distributor appointed by the commissioner of taxation and finance.

(k) Any person who falsely or fraudulently makes, alters or counterfeits a registration certificate or sticker required under the provisions of section four hundred eighty-a of this chapter, or causes or procures to be falsely or fraudulently made, altered or counterfeited any such registration certificate or sticker, or knowingly and willfully utters, purchases, passes or tenders as true any such false, altered or counterfeited registration certificate or sticker, and any person who knowingly and willfully makes, causes to be made, purchases or receives any device for forging or counterfeiting any registration certificate or sticker required under the provisions of such section, or who knowingly and willfully possesses any such device, shall be guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

New York Tax Law:

§1846. Seizure and forfeiture of cigarettes

(a) Whenever a police officer designated in section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law or a peace officer designated in subdivision four of section 2.10 of such law, acting pursuant to his special duties, shall discover any cigarettes subject to tax provided by article twenty of this chapter, and upon which the tax has not been paid or the stamps not affixed as required by such article, they are hereby authorized and empowered forthwith to seize and take possession of such cigarettes, together with any vending machine or receptacle in which they are held for sale. Such cigarettes, vending machine or receptacle seized by a police officer or such peace officer shall be turned over to the tax commission. Such seized cigarettes, vending machine or receptacle, not including money contained in such vending machine or receptacle, shall be forfeited to the state. The tax commission may, within a reasonable time thereafter, upon publication of a notice to such effect for at least five successive days, before the day of sale, in a newspaper published or circulated in the county where the seizure was made, sell such forfeited cigarettes and vending machines or receptacles at public sale and pay the proceeds into the state treasury to the credit of the general fund. Cigarettes so seized and sold shall be sold only to an agent under article twenty of this chapter and the notice of sale shall contain a provision to this effect. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the tax commission may enter into an agreement with any city of this state which is authorized to impose a tax similar to that imposed by article twenty of this chapter to provide for the disposition between the state and any such city of the proceeds from any such sale.

* * *

§1847. Seizure and forfeiture of vehicles or other means of transportation used to transport or for deposit or concealment of cigarettes

(a) Any peace officer designated in subdivision four of section 2.10 of the criminal procedure law, acting pursuant to his special duties, or any police officer designated in section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law may seize any vehicle or other means of transportation used to transport or for the deposit or concealment of more than one hundred unstamped or unlawfully stamped packages of cigarettes subject to tax under article twenty of this chapter, other than a vehicle or other means of transportation used by any person as a common carrier in transaction of business as such common carrier and such vehicle or other means of transportation shall be subject to forfeiture as hereinafter in this section provided.

* * *

20 NYCRR:

335.6 Indian nations or tribes, qualified Indian consumers and registered dealers. [Tax Law §§ 471, 471-a and 475](a) As provided for in this section and section 335.7 of this Part, exempt Indian nations or tribes, qualified Indian consumers and registered dealers (as defined herein) may purchase, on qualified reservations, cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax imposed pursuant to article 20 of the Tax Law.

(b) (1) (i) *Qualified Indian* for purposes of this section means a person, duly enrolled on the tribal rolls of one of the exempt Indian nations or tribes.

(ii) *Qualified Indian consumer* for purposes of this section means a qualified Indian who purchases or intends to purchase cigarettes within the boundaries of a qualified reservation for such Indian's own use or consumption (i.e. other than for resale) within such reservation.

(2) *Exempt Indian nation or tribe* for purposes of this section means one of the following New York State Indian nations or tribes: Cayuga, Oneida Indian Nation, Onondaga Nation of Indians, Poospatuck, St. Regis Mohawk, Seneca Nation of Indians, Shinnecock, Tonawanda Band of Senecas and Tuscarora Nation of Indians.

(3) *Qualified reservation* for purposes of this section means the following reservations of the exempt Indian nations or tribes: Allegany Indian reservation, Cattaraugus Indian reservation, Oil Spring Indian reservation, Oneida Indian territory, Onondaga Indian reservation, Poospatuck Indian reservation, St. Regis Indian reservation, Shinnecock Indian reservation, Tonawanda Indian reservation and Tuscarora Indian reservation.

(4) *Registered dealer* for purposes of this section means:

(i) an Indian or non-Indian retail dealer (including but not limited to a dealer who has either a valid Indian Trader's License issued by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, or a valid license issued by an exempt Indian nation or tribe), who:

(a) registers with the Department of Taxation and Finance; and

(b) makes or intends to make qualified sales of cigarettes on a qualified reservation; or

(ii) a qualified Indian who is a wholesale dealer (including, but not limited to, a dealer who has either a valid Indian Trader's License issued by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, or a valid license issued by an exempt Indian nation or tribe), who:

(a) registers with the Department of Taxation and Finance; and

(b) makes or intends to make qualified sales of cigarettes on qualified reservations.

(5) *Qualified sale* for purposes of this section means a sale of cigarettes made on a qualified reservation by an agent, an exempt Indian nation or tribe, or a registered dealer, without prepayment and precollection of the cigarette tax to an exempt Indian nation or tribe, a registered dealer, or a qualified consumer.

(c) Although stamps are usually affixed to packages of cigarettes as evidence of payment of tax, the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance may authorize the use of a special stamp in order to clearly identify packages of cigarettes which are intended for nontaxable sales to qualified Indians on qualified reservations. If such special stamps are so authorized, the special stamps constitute documentary evidence of non-payment of the tax and, if possessed by a

registered dealer or an Indian for resale outside the boundaries of a qualified reservation, or by a non-Indian or a non-qualified Indian, such specially stamped packages of cigarettes are deemed to be unstamped packages of cigarettes. Cigarettes, upon which the tax has not been prepaid and precollected, and which bear such special stamps may not be sold to non-Indians or non-qualified Indians under any circumstances. In addition, any such specially stamped packages of cigarettes may not be sold outside the boundaries of a qualified reservation, unless such sale is specifically authorized by this Part.

(d) *Exempt Indian nations or tribes.* (1) An exempt Indian nation or tribe may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax for its own use or consumption, or for making qualified sales, provided that the nation or tribe:

(i) holds a valid exempt organization certificate issued by the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance;

(ii) takes delivery of the cigarettes on its qualified reservation; and

(iii) uses, or intends to use, such cigarettes for its own official use or consumption within such reservation, or to make qualified sales.

(2) An exempt Indian nation or tribe may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax by issuing to the seller a properly completed certificate of exemption for qualified Indian nations or tribes. Such exemption certificate must disclose the In-

dian nation's or tribe's exempt organization number referred to in section 529.9(b) of this Title.

(3) Failure to comply with any of the provisions of article 20 of the Tax Law, or any rule or regulation pursuant to such article, may result in the cancellation or suspension of the authority of such nation or tribe to purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax for purposes of making qualified sales.

(e) *Qualified Indian consumers.* (1) a qualified Indian consumer may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax, if such individual:

(i) takes delivery of the cigarettes on a qualified reservation; and

(ii) purchases the cigarettes for such individual's own use or consumption within such reservation.

(2) A qualified Indian consumer may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax, by issuing to the seller of the cigarettes a properly completed certificate of individual Indian exemption for certain taxes on property delivered on a reservation.

(f) *Registered dealers.* (1) Upon application, the Department of Taxation and Finance may register an applicant and issue a certificate of registration as a dealer of cigarettes to such applicant, if the applicant:

(i) (*a*) is an Indian or non-Indian retail dealer who or which makes, or intends to make, qualified sales within the boundaries of a qualified reservation; or

(*b*) is a qualified Indian, who is also a wholesale dealer, who makes, or intends to make, qualified sales within the boundaries of a qualified reservation;

(ii) (*a*) has no outstanding liability for any taxes or other amounts imposed pursuant to the Tax Law which has finally been determined to be due from such applicant; and

(*b*) is properly licensed or registered for any applicable taxes (e.g. that the applicant has a valid certificate of authority for the sales tax pursuant to Tax Law section 1132(c)); and

(iii) (*a*) provides evidence to the department that such applicant has complied (or will comply) with any applicable tribal regulations and/or licensing procedures; and

(*b*) has no outstanding liability for any applicable taxes or other sums which may be imposed by an Indian nation or tribe, and which has finally been determined to be due from such applicant.

(2) Unless so registered, or otherwise specifically provided for in this Part, no person shall sell cigarettes within a qualified reservation without prepayment and precollection of the cigarette tax. No fee is charged for this registration.

(3) A registered dealer may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has no prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax for purposes of making qualified sales, provided that the registered dealer:

(i) has received from the department a valid certificate of registration as a dealer of cigarettes;

(ii) takes delivery of such cigarettes within the boundaries of its qualified reservation; and

(iii) uses or intends to use such cigarettes to make qualified sales.

(4) A registered dealer may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax by issuing to the seller of such cigarettes a properly completed certificate of exemption. Such exemption certificate must indicate such dealer's registration number.

(5) Failure to comply with any of the provisions of article 20 of the Tax Law, or any rule or regulation pursuant to such article, may result in the cancellation or suspension of the registration as a dealer of cigarettes.

(g) (1) The exemption certificates prescribed in subdivision (d), (e) and (f) of this section must be completed by the purchaser and given to the seller of cigarettes upon which the tax has not been prepaid and precollected, at the time of an initial purchase. A separate exemption certificate need not be given for each additional purchase of cigarettes, provided that each delivery of such cigarettes is substantiated as being exempt from tax with an individual bill, invoice, receipt or other form of written evidence given by

the seller showing the exempt Indian nation or tribe, qualified Indian consumer, or registered dealer as the purchaser.

(2) Every bill, invoice, receipt or other form of written evidence given by the seller must indicate the quantity of cigarettes delivered, the purchase price of the cigarettes without regard to any exemption and the price paid or to be paid by the exempt purchaser for such cigarettes. In addition, such evidence of each exempt transaction must be retained by the seller and must be signed and dated by the individual taking delivery of the cigarettes. In the case of a purchase by an exempt Indian nation or tribe, such evidence must also indicate such nation's or tribe's exempt organization number. In the case of a purchase by a registered dealer, such evidence must also indicate the dealer's registration number.

(3) Sellers of cigarettes upon which the tax has not been prepaid and precollected must establish an acceptable system of associating copies of these individual bills, invoices, receipts and other forms of written evidence of exemption from tax with the applicable tax exemption certificates initially received from the purchasers.

(4) A licensed cigarette agent must report all sales of cigarettes to exempt Indian nations or tribes, qualified Indian consumers and registered dealers in its monthly cigarette tax return.

Historical Note
Sec. filed Oct. 17, 1989 eff. Nov. 7, 1989.

335.7 Qualified sales of cigarettes on qualified reservations. [Tax Law, §§471, 471-a, 475 and 481(2)]

(a) (1) The cigarette tax imposed pursuant to article 20 of the Tax Law is not required to be prepaid and precollected when cigarettes are sold under circumstances which preclude the imposition of the tax by reason of the United States Constitution and any laws of the United States enacted pursuant thereto.

(2) Federal constitutional and statutory principles relating to Indian sovereignty, preempt the application of a state cigarette excise tax to a sale of cigarettes on a qualified reservation, if such cigarettes are ultimately purchased on such reservation by a qualified Indian for such Indian's own personal use or consumption. Consistent with such federal principles, sales of cigarettes on a qualified reservation to a non-Indian and non-qualified Indian are subject to the tax since the ultimate incidence of, and liability for, the tax is upon the non-Indian or non-qualified consumer. Additionally, consistent with such principles, all sales of cigarettes made within a state and outside the boundaries of a qualified reservation, regardless of whether the seller and/or the purchaser is an exempt Indian nation or tribe, a registered dealer, or a qualified Indian consumer, are subject to a state's cigarette excise tax.

(b) (1) An agent licensed by the Department of Taxation and Finance to purchase and affix stamps may possess cigarettes upon which the tax has not been prepaid and

precollected for purposes of making qualified sales, if that agent—with the prior approval of the Department of Taxation and Finance, or, if applicable, of an exempt Indian nation or tribe—sells and delivers such cigarettes to:

(i) an exempt Indian nation or tribe;

(ii) a registered dealer; or

(iii) a qualified Indian consumer.

(2) No person other than a duly licensed cigarette agent (and its employees) may possess cigarettes for sale in this State and transport such cigarettes onto a qualified reservation located in this State without prepaying and precollecting the cigarette tax. However, as provided in section 335.6 of this Part, subsequent qualified sales may be made solely on such qualified reservations. Properly completed exemption certificates must be received by all sellers of cigarettes, where the tax has not been prepaid and precollected.

(3) In order to administer the cigarette tax with respect to the sale of cigarettes on qualified reservations consistent with federal constitutional and statutory principles, a cigarette agent may sell and deliver cigarettes without prepayment and precollection of the cigarette tax to exempt Indian nation or tribe, a qualified Indian consumer, or a registered dealer; provided that such agent complies with the applicable provisions of subdivisions (c) and (d) of this section with respect to approval of the amount of such cigarettes to be sold and delivered, and further complies with all of the requirements of this Subchapter.

(c) (1) If an exempt Indian nation or tribe agrees with the Department to regulate, license, or control the sale and distribution within its qualified reservation of an agreed upon amount of cigarettes upon which the seller has permissibly not prepaid and precollected the cigarette tax, then an agent must obtain the approval for delivery from that nation or tribe regarding the agreed upon amount of cigarettes to be sold and delivered without prepayment and precollection of such tax, prior to each such sale and delivery of any such cigarettes on such reservation.

(2) In the absence of such an agreement regarding the sale and distribution of cigarettes upon which the tax has not been prepaid and precollected, the agent must obtain the approval for delivery from the department regarding the amount of cigarettes to be sold and delivered without prepayment and precollection of such tax, prior to each such sale and delivery of any such cigarettes on such reservation.

(d) (1) If applicable, departmental approval for delivery will be based upon evidence of valid purchase orders received by the agent of quantities of cigarettes reasonably related to the probable demand of qualified Indian consumers in the trade territory of the exempt Indian nation or tribe (if such nation or tribe chooses to make qualified sales), or registered dealer.

(2) In determining such probable demand, the department will:

(i) in the event that an exempt Indian nation or tribe regulates, licenses or controls the sale and distribution of cigarettes within its reservation, consult with such nation or tribe regarding any evidence it may submit relating to such probable demand (e.g. records of previous sales to qualified

Indian consumers, records relating to the average consumption of qualified Indian consumers on and near its reservation, tribal enrollment, or other statistical evidence, etc.); or

(ii) in the absence of such regulation or such evidence, calculate such demand based upon the New York average consumption per capita, as compiled for the most recently completed calendar or fiscal year, multiplied by the number of enrolled members of the affected nation or tribe (or, if such membership numbers are unavailable, by the reservation service area population, as compiled by the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs).

(3) In determining such trade territory, the department will:

(i) in the event that an exempt Indian nation or tribe regulates, licenses or controls the sale and distribution of cigarettes within its reservation, consult with such nation or tribe regarding any evidence it may submit relating to such regulated and/or licensed sellers located on its reservation; or

(ii) in the absence of such regulation or such evidence, calculate such trade territory based upon the information at its disposal.

(4) In addition, the department will also take into consideration any evidence submitted by a registered dealer relating to such probable demand and to that dealer's trade territory (e.g. a verified record of previous sales to qualified Indian consumers, evidence of the number of qualified Indian consumers located within a reasonable distance of the dealer's place of business, records indicating the percentage

of such trade historically realized by the dealer, or other statistical evidence in support of the proposed transaction).

(5) In the absence of any such evidence by an exempt Indian nation or tribe or a registered dealer, the department may restrict the total deliveries to any reservation of cigarettes, upon which the tax has not been prepaid and precollected, to an amount calculated pursuant to subparagraphs (2)(ii) and (3)(ii) of this subdivision.

(6) Approval for sale or delivery to an exempt nation or tribe or to a registered dealer will be denied where the department finds that such nation or tribe, or dealer are or have been making sales in violation of this Subchapter.

(e) Exempt Indian nations or tribes, qualified Indian consumers, and registered dealers may purchase cigarettes upon which the seller has not prepaid and precollected the tax, only to the extent provided in this section and in section 335.6 of this Part. The possession within this State at any one time of more than 400 cigarettes in unstamped (or unlawfully stamped) packages by any Indian nation or tribe, qualified Indian consumer or registered dealer, except as provided herein, shall be presumptive evidence that such cigarettes are subject to tax. Such Indian nations or tribes, consumers, and dealers, who or which purchase cigarettes under any other circumstances must prepay or pay, as the case may be, the cigarette tax at the time of purchase by remitting the tax to the seller as part of the purchase price of the cigarettes.

Historical Note

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